

Frequently Asked Questions of the Media Campaign Resource Center



1. What is the Media Campaign Resource Center (MCRC)?

The Media Campaign Resource Center (MCRC) is a clearinghouse funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health. The MCRC licenses and maintains an inventory of existing tobacco control advertisements developed by a number of U.S. states, organizations, and federal agencies. By providing access to existing advertising materials, the Resource Center allows states, organizations, and government agencies to save the time and high cost of producing new ads.

2. What types of advertisements does the MCRC have in its collection?

There are hundreds of television and radio commercials, as well as print and outdoor ads, in the MCRC collection. The print ads may be used in newspapers or magazines, and the outdoor ads may be used on billboards or posters, as taxi tops or as bus and subway ads. (The words "advertisements" and "ads" will be used interchangeably in this document to refer to all media types. The words "commercials" and "spots" will be used interchangeably in this document to refer to ads for television or radio.)

3. Who can use the MCRC ads?

The MCRC materials may be used only by nonprofit health-related organizations or government agencies. Each organization/agency must sign a use agreement specifying the intended use of the ads and obligating the user to pay all associated costs (talent/photographer/music fees, tagging, shipping, and duplicating). Per our licensing agreements with the original producers of the materials, for-profit organizations are not allowed to use any materials other than those produced directly by CDC. Permission for these for-profit organizations to use CDC materials will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may not be granted.

4. What are the talent fees and how much are they?

Performers in the commercials are paid "talent fees," both when the commercial is originally produced and when it is reused. In most cases, performers are members of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) or the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA). These unions govern the minimum charges for each type of use. In some cases, performers in nonunion commercials have been paid a single fee for all uses of the commercial; this is called a "buy-out," and no further talent fees are due. The MCRC has compiled all of the "free" ads onto appropriate formats for educational use or for broadcast. (Please see question 17 below about fees for use of MCRC spots outside the United States.)

There are two types of talent fees: "holding fees" and "use fees." The "holding fee" is a baseline activation fee

that covers a 13-week period for a particular spot. The rate stays the same for 21 months as long as the spot is renewed consecutively every 13 weeks. Whenever it is dropped after any 13-week cycle, the commercial must be "reinstated" for new use; the fee often increases at this time. The "use fee" covers the specific city or state where the ad will be shown. If one state pays a holding fee, other states may use the same commercial at the same time by paying only the use fee. (The "Advertising on a Tight Budget" section of the MCRC Web site lists the spots that are airing currently.)

Talent fees for each commercial are determined by a number of factors, including

- the number of performers in the commercial.
- the rate each performer charges (some may accept the minimum rate allowed by SAG, called "scale"; others may charge more—these rates are negotiated between the performers or their agents and the MCRC).
- the type of use—paid use on network affiliates, cable use, use as a public service announcement, use in theaters or schools, etc.
- the music fee, if there is music in the spot.

The MCRC can provide estimates of talent fees for each commercial based on expected use. The exact cost will not be determined until rates are negotiated individually for each specific use.

5. Why don't performers donate their time on this kind of commercial?

The Screen Actors Guild does not allow members to donate their services entirely because, in the past, there have been cases with other public service causes where actors' services were abused. Some people are motivated to appear in the MCRC commercials because of their own personal experiences with tobacco or because they believe in the tobacco counter-marketing cause. They normally are willing to accept the minimum "scale" payments. For most of the actors in MCRC commercials, this is a job like any other, and they charge accordingly.

6. Aren't public service announcements (PSAs) supposed to be free?

Public service announcements (PSAs) are not defined by the content of the ad, but rather an ad is called a PSA when it is aired on donated time. The time is donated by the television or radio station that airs the ad—in other words, no one buys the advertising time.

To air a commercial as a PSA, one fee is paid to performers for an entire year of use nationwide. As long as the PSA airs on donated time, there is no limit to how many times or how many places the commercial may air during that one year.

7. Why aren't all MCRC advertisements paid for as PSAs?

The radio and television stations that air PSAs—not the organization providing the ads—choose the times to air them. PSAs often are aired at off-hours and times that cannot be sold to regular advertisers, such as in the middle of the night. Sometimes individual stations will agree to air PSAs throughout the day, but usually it is more effective to buy air time on a station and determine yourself when the commercials will air to ensure that your message is reaching your target audience with sufficient frequency. By paying for the air time, the ad becomes a paid commercial, not a PSA.

8. What are the fees for Internet usage of MCRC ads?

Internet usage of MCRC ads is not free. Contact the MCRC for the current rates.

9. What about using the MCRC commercials in schools, theaters, clinics, and other community sites?

These uses are not free. The MCRC has a special agreement with SAG to allow use of the commercials in schools at PSA rates. Other uses, such as in theaters, sports arenas, health care clinics/offices, community centers, etc., require payment under “theatrical and industrial use” fees. This is a more expensive rate, but it covers 21 months of use. The MCRC free ads video may be used for these purposes without any fees (see question 4).

10. With so many ads available, how do I select which MCRC ads that I want to use?

The MCRC offers many resources to help you select which ads might be appropriate for your campaign:

- The MCRC Online Database contains detailed information on the MCRC's extensive collection of tobacco counter-advertisements for television, radio, print, and outdoor use. It allows users to view the ads and order them online (see question 11).
- The MCRC Catalog is a set of videotapes or CDs that allows MCRC customers to preview the television and radio ads currently available in our collection. The MCRC Catalog may be ordered for \$20 on CD or \$25 on videotape by calling the MCRC at 770-488-5705 and pressing 2.
- Lists of spots currently in use as PSAs and paid commercials are available in the “Advertising on a Tight Budget” section of the MCRC Web site. These spots often are less expensive because you are sharing costs with another user. This site also lists a number of spots that have no talent fees at all.
- The MCRC also offers technical assistance to help you select commercials appropriate for your campaign. Contact the MCRC for more information about this service.

11. What information is in the MCRC Database?

The MCRC Online Database contains detailed information on the MCRC's extensive collection of tobacco counter-advertisements for television, radio, print, and

outdoor use. You can use the MCRC Database to browse the MCRC collection, mark advertisements of interest, and request more information.

The Database default is to search only current ads that are available for use in counter-marketing campaigns. The full search page also allows you to search older ads from our archive and ads that are no longer available. This advanced search function is useful for researchers and others who are seeking information about older campaigns.

12. Once I've selected the ads I want to use, how do I order them?

First, you will need to visit the MCRC Online Database and add the advertisements to your “requested ads” list. At this point, you should also determine if the costs are within your price range (a price range for each ad is listed on the database). At the same time you request your ads, you will provide information on how you plan to use the ads so that we can provide you with a more accurate estimate of the costs for the selected ads. Whenever you request talent fee estimates for a particular ad, you will need to provide the following information:

TV/radio

- cities or markets where it will be broadcast.
- length of time it will be broadcast (1 month, 6 months, etc.).
- expected first air date.
- for cable TV—the number of cable subscribers for the cable system on which you will buy time (your local cable affiliate can provide this information).

Outdoor (billboards, bus ads, taxi toppers, airport backlit ads, etc.)

- number of boards/ads.
- how long each will be placed.
- cities/states/markets where ads will appear.

Print ads (magazines, newspapers, etc.)

- size of ad.
- number of times it will run.
- circulation of magazine or newspaper (the publication can provide this information).

When you have selected the actual ads or commercials you wish to use, the MCRC will send you a use agreement that confirms your obligation to pay the associated costs. A person authorized to bind your organization to legal agreements must sign this document. We will not start any work on your order (e.g., tagging and duplication) until we receive the signed copy of this agreement. *Once this agreement has been signed, you are obligated to pay the talent fees even if you decide later not to use a particular ad.*

Once we receive your signed agreement, we will tag (see questions 13 and 16) and duplicate your materials. Turnaround normally is 3-5 business days. The tapes or

CDs will be shipped via overnight delivery to you or the media outlets or printing vendors you specify. The entire process, from the day we first receive your signed order, usually takes about 2 weeks.

13. Can I add the name of my organization to each ad?

The Federal Communications Commission requires that each television and radio commercial be identified with the name of its sponsoring organization. This visual or audio identification of your organization is called a “tag.” The tag must not mention the name of any specific government officials (governors, mayors, etc.) since the ads are not to be used for political purposes. The MCRC will add your visual tag to each of the television commercials you order. Audio tags are required for radio but not for television. MCRC customers are responsible for audio tags for television (if desired) and radio commercials (see question 16). You may be able to get a local radio station to tag radio spots for free. The MCRC customers will resize (if necessary) and tag print and outdoor ads.

14. What are the costs for using the MCRC commercials?

In addition to the talent fees (see question 4), there are costs for tagging (see question 13), duplication, and shipping. CDC will pay for the tagging and duplication costs if you are ordering ads that are neither free nor part of a current ad package (see questions 15 and 16). In these cases, MCRC customers will be responsible only for the talent fees (see question 4). For orders of free ads and orders that are part of an ad package (see question 15), MCRC customers are responsible for paying the tagging and duplication costs. CDC pays for the shipping costs on all orders.

15. What is an ad package and how does it help me save money?

In order to help make paid advertising campaigns easier and more affordable, CDC sometimes offers a package of ads at reduced cost. For these packages, CDC selects a set of ads on a particular theme and pays some or all of the talent fees associated with the use of these ads. MCRC customers are then responsible for covering the costs for tagging and duplication. Question 15 provides more information about costs for tagging and duplication. Please contact the MCRC for information about current ad packages and specific costs.

16. How much do tagging, duplication and shipping cost for free ads or ad package orders?

Visual tagging (for TV) costs \$125 for one ad, \$95 each for two to five ads, and \$80 each for six or more ads.* Space is limited, so you should keep the tag to 40 characters or fewer.

For radio and television, duplication costs vary by format.

- For TV, 1” tapes are \$20 each, 3/4” tapes are \$25 each, and Beta SP and digital tapes are approximately \$65 per copy.
- For radio, DAT tapes are \$35 each, 1/4” tapes (reel to reel) are \$10 each, and cassettes cost

\$10 each. CD-ROM versions are \$300/hr for creating the digital files plus \$10 for the CD.

For most of the print ads and billboards, you will receive the artwork in electronic form on a CD-ROM. CDs cost \$10 and can usually fit approximately 12 ads. The MCRC can add a tag to the electronic version of print and outdoor materials for a fee of \$20, if necessary. You are responsible for printing all posters, billboards, and other print materials.

For theater use, television, print and outdoor ads can be provided on 35 mm film. Costs vary, so please call the MCRC for an estimate.

17. Can the MCRC commercials be used outside the United States?

SAG rates cover use of TV spots in the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Outside these areas, television talent fees are paid by region: United Kingdom, Europe without UK, Japan, Asia without Japan, and the rest of the world. These fees cover television and theatrical use within the specified region for 21 months. The ads may not be incorporated into a separate media production.

For radio, one lump sum is paid for 18 months and covers all use outside the United States, Mexico, and Canada. Spots on the MCRC free ads videos have no fees for use anywhere in the world. Domestic and overseas users sign the same use agreement, although tagging requirements may vary by country.

18. May I use materials from countries other than the United States in my country?

The MCRC has a compilation of cessation ads from around the world to facilitate communication and sharing of information among different countries. Other topic areas are being collected and will also be compiled. These materials are available only for pre-viewing. We are not able to negotiate the use of ads (e.g., broadcast, placement in print publications, billboards, etc.) produced outside the United States, but we are able to provide contact information in the original producing countries.

19. What if I want to change some of the words in a commercial or just use part of it to make my own spot?

Any changes to the body of the spot—words or images—must be approved in advance by the original producing agency as well as the original sponsoring health department/organization. This approval is determined on a case-by-case basis, and permission to make changes to the content of the spot is not always granted. Approval to translate a spot into a different language normally is granted, with final review of the translation by the producing agency and/or organization.

20. What about putting the spots on a CD-ROM or on our Web site?

These uses must be negotiated with the individual performers/models/photographers in each ad. For television and radio commercials, the fees are separate and additional to any broadcast use.

21. Is there a cost to use ads in focus groups or other research?

There are very few ads that can be used for free, even for research purposes. Most of the ads incur talent fees for any use. The only way these fees can be avoided is if the ads are being shown to a focus group by an agency that will ultimately be purchasing the “winning” commercials for use in a campaign. Contact the MCRC before any such use is planned, as any misuse could lead to the assessment of fines and after-the-fact talent fees. The MCRC does have a video of ads that do not incur talent fees for use in focus groups or other research (see question 4).

22. How do I place ads that I have produced into the MCRC?

Placing your ads into the MCRC allows other states and organizations to take advantage of the hard work, time, and expense that you have put into producing high quality materials. If you represent a non-profit health organization or government agency and have materials to share, the first step is to contact the MCRC. We will send you a licensing agreement that allows CDC the nonexclusive rights to redistribute your materials. A representative from your organization who is authorized to bind your organization to legal agreements must sign this document. Then you send us the ads in master format, along with information about the actors, models, photographers, and other talent in the ads. You will also send us information such as themes,

target audiences, etc. about each ad so we can include this information in the database. Please send materials that do not have your state's or organization's tag so that the states/organizations using your ads can add their own.

All of the states and organizations that have placed their ads in the MCRC have done so as a service to others in tobacco control. There is no cost to the producing state/organization to place ads in the MCRC, nor is there any payment to the producing state/organization to include ads in the collection. Any talent fees for use of the ads are incurred by the state/organization that uses the ads.

We receive many inquiries from individuals, advertising agencies, schools, etc. that have produced materials and want to include them in the MCRC. Unfortunately, most of these materials are not of broadcast quality, and most are not based on rigorous research and testing, as are the materials produced for tobacco control programs at the state or national level. Therefore, we restrict materials that we accept into the MCRC to only those produced by state health departments, nonprofit health organizations, and federal agencies. If you are from an entity other than a government or nonprofit health organization and have produced high quality ads that are used in a statewide or national tobacco control effort, or you have research to demonstrate their effectiveness, please contact the MCRC to discuss. Exceptions to this policy will be made on a case-by-case basis and may not be granted.

**Note: The fees listed in this document are valid as of May 2004 and are subject to change without notice. Please call the MCRC to confirm fees.*

Other Questions? If you have other questions about the MCRC that have not been answered in this document, please contact us and we will be happy to help you.

To order ads or Video Catalogs, or to receive more information, contact the MCRC at:

Office on Smoking and Health

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Mail Stop K-50

Attn: Media Campaign Resource Center (MCRC)
4770 Buford Hwy, NE • Atlanta, GA 30341-3717

Phone: 770-488-5705, press 2 • E-mail: mcrc@cdc.gov

Please call or e-mail for overnight delivery address and fax number.

For other publication requests, general information about tobacco, or other inquiries, please contact:

Office on Smoking and Health

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Mail Stop K-50

4770 Buford Hwy, NE • Atlanta, GA 30341-3717

Phone: 770-488-5705, press 3

E-mail: tobaccoinfo@cdc.gov

Automated Voice/Fax Information System:
1-800-CDC-1311



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

